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R 091602Z MAY 08
FM AMCONSUL LAGOS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 9899
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE
RUEHUJA/AMEMBASSY ABUJA 9613
RUEHNY/AMEMBASSY OSLO 0194
RUFOADA/JAC MOLESWORTH AFB UK
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RUCPDOG/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC
RHMCSUU/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHINGTON DC
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RUSSNRB/HQ USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE

UNCLAS LAGOS 000168

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED - HANDLE ACCORDINGLY
SIPDIS

OSLO FOR HELENA SCHRADER
DOE FOR GPERSON, CHAYLOCK
TREASURY FOR ASEVERENS, SRENENDER, DFIELDS
COMMERCE FOR KBURRESS
STATE PASS USTR FOR ASST USTR FLISER
STATE PASS TRANSPORTATION FOR MARAD
STATE PASS OPIC FOR ZHAN AND MSTUCKART
STATE PASS TDA FOR NCABOT
STATE PASS EXIM FOR JRICHTER
STATE PASS USAID FOR GWEYNAND AND SLAWAETZ

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: NIGERIA SPOT REPORT: BAYELSA PDP BOMBED 2 DAYS
BEFORE BY-ELECTION CAMPAIGN

¶1. (SBU) The secretariat building of the Bayelsa State People's Democratic Party (PDP) was bombed with dynamite on May 8, two days before the state PDP chapter was to announce former governor Timipre Sylva as its candidate and begin campaigning for the gubernatorial by-election. A reliable contact within Sylva's office told Poloff on May 9 that there were no known injuries resulting from the attack and the motive was unknown. A Bayelsa government official in the protocol office confirmed Vice President Goodluck Jonathan (former Governor of Bayelsa) plans to attend the PDP kick-off in Bayelsa on Saturday; President Yar'Adua is scheduled to join the Vice President and, as of May 9, had not notified state representatives of a change in his plans. However, media reports on May 9 indicate that Yar'Adua may cancel his trip due to security concerns.

¶2. (SBU) Our contact in the former governor's office suggested the attack on the PDP secretariat may have been caused by people trying to "create insecurity" because they wanted the elections to be postponed. He thought one of two groups may have been responsible; either PDP members who support candidates other than Sylva or members of opposition parties hoping to postpone the election. However, he thought the latter possibility as unlikely as there are virtually no active opposition parties in the state.

¶3. (SBU) Further supporting his hypothesis, our source in the former governor's office noted the office of the former Deputy Governor was recently burgled, suggesting to him someone was seeking documents which could sully the governor's campaign; no such documents exist, he claimed. He predicted the attack on the PDP secretariat would not affect the upcoming May 10 PDP rally to announce Sylva as the party's gubernatorial by-election candidate.

¶4. (SBU) Comment: Our contact's suggestion that a non-Sylva PDP faction may have been responsible for this attack is reasonable. Sylva was a PDP consensus candidate in the 2007

elections and interlocutors throughout the Niger Delta since then have commented on Sylva's tenuous support from within the Bayelsa PDP. End Comment.

15. (U) This cable was cleared by Embassy Abuja.
BLAIR